

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NOUAKC 01566 081659Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----106879 081708Z /47
R 081615Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7766

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STADIS////////////////////

EXDIS

FOR UNDERSECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AMGT, APER, MR
SUBJECT: PERSONNEL LEVELS

REF: STATE 154335

1. STAFF OF U.S. MISSION IN MAURITANIA IS PROBABLY LEANEST IN SAHEL AND ONE OF LEANEST OF ANYWHERE IN WORLD. CURRENT AMERICAN MODE CEILINGS (SO FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE) ARE: STATE 10; AID7; PC3. AID HAS IG ADDITION (ABM U.S. CONTRACTOR GROUP WHICH IS SMALL AT MOMENT (WITH ONLY ONE TEAM INPLACE). BUT WHICH IS EXPECTED TO GROW SUBSTANTIALLY WHEN FORMAL AGREEMENTS COVERING TWO BASIC ANALYTICAL STUDIES ARE NEGOTIATED AND SIGNED WITH MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT OVER NEXT FEW MONTHS; AND (B) VARYING CONTINGENT OF TDY EXPERTS WHO ARE REQUIRED FOR SHORT PERIODS FOR DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROJECTS PROMISED UNDER SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, SENEGAL RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION(OMVS) AND U.S. MAURITANIA BILATERAL CONVERSATIONS.

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2. PROBLEM IN NOUAKCHOTT IS NOT RPT NOT OVERSTAFFING. PROBLEM IS REVERSE: INABILITY OF U.S. AGENCIES TO KEEP AUTHORIZED SLOTS CONTINUOUSLY FILLED. AID TEAM STRUGGLED ALONG AT HALF AUTHORIZED STRENGTH FROM DECEMBER 1976 TO JUNE 1977 WHEN ONE ADDITIONAL BODY ARRIVED, RAISING PERCENTAGE SLIGHTLY. PC/WASHINGTON HAS PROVIDED CRITICALLY NEEDED TDY ASSISTANCE FROM TIME TO TIME SINCE EARLY 1977, AND HAS PROMISED TO FILL ASSOCIATE

PC DIRECTOR SLOT ESTABLISHED THREE YEARS AGO IN OPENING WEEKS OF NEW FISCAL YEAR. STATE GSO JOB WAS VACANT (MOST RECENTLY) FOR OVER FOUR WEEKS, AND AMBASSADOR, DCM, AND JUNIOR ACTION/REPORTING OFFICER HAVE HAD SECRETARIAL SUPPORT SINCE JUNE FIRST (AND WILL HAVE UNTIL LATE SEPTEMBER) ONLY BECAUSE AF/EX HAS GENEROUSLY AND EFFECTIVELY ORGANIZED SUCCESSION OF TDY ANDROVER FILL-INS.

3. IN 1977 PARM, MISSION FORMALIZED REQUEST FLAGGED TO AGENCIES EARLIER FOR ADDITIONAL JUNIOR OFFICER TO HANDLE GROWING INFORMATIONAL/CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND SHARE ACTION/REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES HEAPED ON EXISTING JUNIOR OFFICER. WE SUGGESTED STATE AND USIA SHARE COST AS WELL AS OUTPUT. ON THEORY NO NEWS IS GOOD, WE REMAIN CAUTIOUSLY HOPEFUL THAT NEEDED POSITION AND FUNDS MAY STILL BE FOUND IN TIME TO PERMIT MID FY78 ARRIVAL. ON MAY 3, MISSION REQUESTED (NOUAKCHOTT1007) INCREASE IN AID MODE CEILING OF TWO TO COVER ASSISTANT PROGRAM OFFICER AND FINANCIAL ANALYST. ON MAY 4, MISSION REQUESTED (NOUAKCHOTT 1014) ESTABLISHMENT OF TWO ADDITIONAL GENERAL SERVICES OFFICER POSITIONS AND ASAP INITIATION OF ASSIGNMENTS. PROCESS AS FIRST STEP IN IMPLEMENTATION EXPANSION OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT MECHANISM/STAFF REQUIRED TO COPE WITH MAJOR INCREASE PROJECTED IN AID PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND CONSEQUENT INCREASE IN AID DIRECT HIRE AND CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL. NO RESPONSES RECEIVED TO DATE.

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4. HARSH PHYSICAL AND FRUSTRATING INSTITUTIONAL/ADMINISTRATIVE ENVIRONMENT OF MAURITANIA MAKE NOUAKCHOTT ONE OF TOUGHEST POSTS IN FOREIGN SERVICE. UNDEREMPLOYMENT OR OBSERVATION OF UNDEREMPLOYMENT WITHIN MISSION WOULD ADD SUBSTANTIALLY STAFFERS' ALREADY DIFFICULT EXISTENCE. THUS FOR BROAD RANGE OF MANAGEMENT REASONS (MORALE AND STAFF EFFECTIVENESS AS WELL AS BUDGETARY AND U.S. PRESENCE), SENIOR AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES AND I ARE DETERMINED TO KEEP MISSION STAFF TO ABSOLUTE MINIMUM REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT TASKS ASSIGNED US.

HANDYSIDE

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Message Attributes

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